

WEEKLY ReCAP**JANUARY 8, 2021****A Sampling of News and Views****P.O. Box 935, San Andreas, CA, 95249 • (209) 772-1463*****Protecting our rural environment by promoting citizen participation in sustainable land use planning since 2006***

The Community Action Project (CAP) administers the Calaveras Planning Coalition (CPC), which is comprised of regional and local organizations, community groups, and concerned individuals who promote public participation in land use and resource planning to ensure a healthy human, natural, and economic environment now and in the future. Learn more at www.calaverascap.com.

**NEXT CALAVERAS PLANNING COALITION MEETING:
February 1, 2021, 3:00 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M. VIA ZOOM**

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME AT CPC MEETINGS

Organizations, groups, and individuals may join the CPC. Prospective members may attend two consecutive meetings before making a final decision on membership in the Coalition. The membership form is a pledge to support and advocate for the Coalition's eleven Land Use and Development Principles, which you will find on our website: www.calaverascap.com. There is no membership fee. However, members are encouraged to donate to the CAP/CPC. Visitors and prospective members will, by necessity, be excluded from attorney/client privileged discussions.

If you are interested in CPC membership, please email CPC Facilitator Tom Infusino, tomi@volcano.net, to receive a membership form, agenda, and the Zoom meeting connection.

To help prevent the spread of Covid-19 in our county, all CAP/CPC meetings will be held online via Zoom until restrictions are lifted by the Public Health Department.

Upcoming Board of Supervisors Meetings

BOS – January 11, 2021 – 10:00 a.m. - swearing in of new supervisors. Single item agenda.

BOS – January 12, 2021 – check agenda online for more detail

Regular Agenda

23. [Conduct a public hearing and adopt a Resolution approving 2019-052 General Plan Amendment from Residential Low Density \(RDL\) to Rural Residential \(RR\) for Sierra Parkway Properties](#)
24. [Conduct a public hearing and adopt an Ordinance approving 2019-052 Zoning Amendment from Single Family Residential \(R1\) to Rural Residential \(RR\) for Sierra Parkway Properties and authorize the County to publish a brief property description and map of the subject property.](#)
25. [Conduct a public hearing and adopt a Resolution approving 2019-052 Tentative Subdivision Tract Map to divide 15.29 acres of land into 6 residential parcels and adopting the Mitigated Negative Declaration and Monitory Program for Sierra Parkway Properties](#)
26. [Receive a presentation on the Zoning Ordinance Update](#)

Tuolumne Supervisors Approve Terra Vi Lodge Yosemite

Sabrina Biehl Dec 31, 2020 / *MyMotherLode.com*

Sonora, CA – After a six hour meeting, Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors voted 5-0 to approve the Environmental Impact (EIR) Report for the Terra Vi Lodge Yosemite project with a limit on green house gas emissions. Most of the time was spent assessing possible EIR errors, and several hours of public comments, many against and some in support of the project.

The Terra Vi Lodge Yosemite project plans to construct 140 guest rooms, 25 cabins, a market, and a lodge near the intersection of Highway 120 and Sawmill Mountain Road. There will also be employee housing, outdoor amenities, walkways and parking. It will spread across 64-acres at the intersection of Highway 120 and Sawmill Mountain Road approximately half way between the community of Buck Meadows and the Yosemite National Park entrance.

Additional discussion by the supervisors related to the site development permit took another hour and also passed 5-0. The development permit addressed additional well monitoring due to neighbor's concerns about their wells and drought. It was added that current monitoring wells on the property be used to monitor ground water levels similar to the production wells and that data be report to the state. Reduction of vegetation for fire clearance was discussed but no additional requirement was added. The supervisors discussed the helicopter landing pad and stated that no private helicopters would be allowed to use the landing site, with FAA and Caltrans able to fine any improper non emergency use of it.

Those in favor of the new lodging praised its economic and tax boost for the area while those opposed voiced concerns of a lack of water, wildfire safety and traffic. Karl Rodefer noted that the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) which requires an EIR process has taken three years, stating "This is far from rushed" he agreed with Supervisor John Grey that to let incoming supervisors decide would be "kicking the can down the road" and delay the project another six months noting, "We're trying to do the best that we can, all be at with a limited timeframe. This board has been immersed in this project at least the last six months and our staff has been immersed in it for the three years." He concluded, "I believe after looking at it, and I know the opponents; John Buckley at CSERC [Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center] and maybe the river trust, you're not going to agree with me. I believe our EIR does meet the adequacy standard." Sherry Brennan added she believed the demand for lodging from people wanting to visit public lands in Tuolumne will only increase in the future. Supervisor District 3 Anaiah Kirk noted the board's process wasn't perfect, but said, "I don't think any way that we were to do this, I think it is still going to be litigated. Unfortunately the only people who win in these situations are attorneys."

As earlier reported here, the planning commission approved the plans and it was appealed to the board.

With this approval the project developers, Hanji Corporation an investment group out of Los Angeles, can move forward with any grading or building permits.

As reported here the hearing on whether to approve the Terra Vi Lodge at Yosemite ended abruptly on Tuesday evening. The project was in the news on May 2, 2019 when the public comment period opened as detailed here.

Two weeks ago the supervisors supported the luxury tent camping resort, Yosemite Undercanvas, planned for Highway 120 and Hardin Flat Road on Dec. 18 as reported here. Yosemite Undercanvas includes 99 rental tent units, a reception tent, mobile kitchen, laundry facilities and bathrooms spread over 80 acres. An appeal of the 5-1 approval by the planning commission was filed, sending it to the board of supervisors. Conditions were added to the project by the supervisors including not allowing the developer to use wood stoves for heating the luxury tents, they must use propane, pedestrian pathways to the YARTS bus turnouts, and using roughly \$272,000 in traffic impact mitigation fees collected from the developer for improvements to Hardin Flat Road.

Thursday was the final meeting for outgoing supervisors John Gray, Sherri Brennan and Karl Rodefer. Incoming supervisors Kathleen Haff, David Goldemberg and Jaron Brandon will take the oath of office next week.

Written by Sabrina Biehl.

<https://www.mymotherlode.com/news/local/1453511/tuolumne-supervisors-approve-terra-vi-lodge-yosemite.html>

Supervisors uphold Terra Vi Lodge approval

Alex MacLean Jan 4, 2021 / *Union Democrat*

A proposed resort about five miles west of the Highway 120 entrance to Yosemite National Park will be allowed to move forward after Tuolumne County supervisors unanimously upheld the project's approval

at a meeting that spanned more than six hours on Thursday.

The board's decision to greenlight the so-called Terra Vi Lodge followed another six-hour meeting on Tuesday that had to be continued until 9 a.m. Thursday after it was discovered comments from the Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center in Twain Harte were left out of the project's final analysis due to an "inadvertent error."

As a result of the error, county staff had to prepare an "errata" to respond to the center's comments as required by California environmental law and released the 72-page document shortly before 3 p.m. on Wednesday.

County supervisors justified their decision by speaking about the requirements under the law, the rights of property owners to develop their land if they are following all of the rules. and how there is always opposition to every significant development project that comes before the board.

"While I really do sympathize with the personal impacts that a project such as this is going to have on some people, that's not the decision-making architecture I have to operate in when I make my decisions," said outgoing County Supervisor Karl Rodefer.

The project will construct a lodge with 100 guest rooms, seven detached cabins totaling 26 additional guest rooms, five apartment buildings each containing four units each for employee housing, a public market, and emergency helipad, which would cover about 18% of a 64-acre property at Sawmill Mountain Road and Highway 120.

Wells and an onsite septic system would provide water and sewer to the buildings due to the lack of public infrastructure for those services in the remote area. Due to the lack of public water and sewer in the remote area about 20 miles east of Groveland.

More than 40 people spoke during the public-comment periods at each meeting on Tuesday and Thursday, with many of the same speakers voicing their opinions both. Most were opposed to the project, though six spoke in favor on Tuesday and 11 spoke in favor on Thursday.

Many of the opponents live or own property near the project, though one woman read a list of 30-plus names of people who live in other parts of the county and say they are opposed to it but didn't speak at the meeting.

Opponents have said the project will forever destroy the natural beauty of the area, increase the risk for fires, compromise evacuation routes, cause other wells in the area to dry up in drought years, and place a further burden on already strained county services in the Highway 120 like fire protection, law enforcement, and ambulance.

People in favor of the project have said it will benefit the county by providing needed additional accommodations for tourists, give them a place to stay other than dispersed camping in the forest, and boost tax revenues to support improving county services in the area.

The hearings on Tuesday and Thursday were to consider appeals of the project's approval by the county Planning Commission on Dec. 1 that were filed by Clare Cosovich, Matthew Chapman, and a group of neighboring property owners called Save Sawmill Mountain.

Cosovich's appeal, which said she believed there was insufficient water in the area, was accused of being disingenuous by the Save Sawmill Mountain group because of her purported engagement to a relative of the property owner.

On Tuesday, Cosovich was given 15 minutes to explain her appeal and said she had changed her mind

after reading the analysis of the project. She also slammed the opponents as being “selfish” and more concerned about the impacts on their own personal property.

The owner of the property is the wife of the late Tim Manly, a former logger who purchased the land in the late 1980s and got it rezoned in the 1990s for commercial development with an eye toward a future site for a hotel.

Another property owned by the Manly family about a quarter-mile away at Hardin Flat Road and Highway 120 was also unanimously approved by the board earlier this month for the development of a 99-tent luxury campground called Yosemite Under Canvas, despite opposition from many of the same people who are against the Terra Vi Lodge.

Many of the opponents also accused the process to approve both projects of being “rushed” by the county and scheduled around the holidays to limit participation and allow the three outgoing county supervisors to consider the appeals before their successors take office on Monday.

County Supervisor John Gray, who represents the area that’s part of District 4 and will retire Monday after 12 years on the board, talked about how public notices about the project first went out more than two years ago and lamented about how the county can improve public services without such developments or tax increases.

“There’s been talk of funding, or a lack thereof, for emergency services,” he said. “We end up kind of against the wall because every time we try to propose a tax measure that would bring money to improve those services, the property owner or taxpayer chooses not to help us along with that.”

Contact Alex MacLean at amaclean@uniondemocrat.net or (209) 768-5175.

https://www.uniondemocrat.com/news/article_7d54f99c-4ec5-11eb-9d83-83bd003a8013.html

Public Health reports 45 new cases of Covid-19 in Calaveras County

January 5, 2021 - *The Calaveras Enterprise*

The following press release was issued by Calaveras Public Health.

On Tuesday, January 5, 2021, Calaveras Public Health confirmed 45 additional cases of COVID-19 in Calaveras County. To date, Calaveras Public Health reports a total of 898 confirmed cases of COVID-19. Of those cases, 748 cases have since recovered while 128 cases remain active. There have been a total of 22 confirmed deaths related to COVID-19 reported in Calaveras County.

Calaveras Public Health announced that it will be offering no-cost COVID-19 testing in San Andreas and Copperopolis this week. Testing location, days and times vary.

SAN ANDREAS - January 6, 2021

San Andreas Library

1299 Gold Hunter Road

9:00AM - 2:00PM

COPPEROPOLIS - January 7, 2021

The Armory

695 Main Street

9:30AM - 1:30P

No appointment is needed to get tested at either event. Register ahead and show up anytime during testing hours. People can register using a QR code or by visiting <https://bit.ly/3h1pTMT>. Masks covering your nose and mouth are required. Other dates and locations will be announced.

The test is a self-administered nasal swab. It only goes into the nostril a little bit to gather a sample. Results typically take 1-3 days, though the actual time may vary. You will receive your results online. A text and email notification will be sent when results are ready.

To help stop the spread of COVID-19, people should take these steps while waiting for test results:

- If you have been in contact with someone with COVID-19 or have any symptoms of COVID-19, stay home and away from others
- Monitor your health for symptoms of COVID-19
- Think about the people you have recently been around. This will be important information to give health workers if your test is positive.
- Answer the phone call from Calaveras Public Health or call 754-6460 if your test is positive.

People should self-quarantine as much as possible while awaiting the results. Without self-quarantine during that time, you may be exposing others to the virus if you have it. If you get a negative result on your test, continue to physically distance yourself and monitor for symptoms. If you get a positive result on your test, you should isolate yourself as much as possible. Work with family and friends ahead of time to make a shared plan for how to help someone with COVID-19 receive care, isolate, and go to the hospital if symptoms are severe. A person who has tested positive with COVID-19 may not have all or any of these symptoms. A person who has tested positive but does not have any symptoms is considered asymptomatic and can still pass on the virus to others while they are infectious.

Calaveras Public Health is working to resolve a discrepancy between the number of COVID-19 cases reported by us compared to those reported by the state. Positive cases are reported in the state's coronavirus tracking database. The tests reported to Calaveras Public Health are approximate. Case counts can change or even decrease due to duplicates, incorrect addresses, or individuals found not to reside within Calaveras County. One of the primary objectives of Calaveras Public Health is to protect the health of our community by contacting positive cases to confirm their status, and ensuring they have instructions to safely isolate themselves. Calaveras Public Health is working diligently to resolve case count reporting issues. This becomes more complicated as cases continue to rise, resources become more scarce, and as Calaveras Public Health prioritizes COVID-19 testing and vaccine distribution efforts. The public must assume widespread transmission of COVID-19 within our county and take seriously the recommended prevention measures to protect their family and friends from this pandemic.

Calaveras Public Health continues to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to priority groups according to the CDPH Allocation Guidelines for COVID-19 Vaccine. Vaccine allocation is administered in phases by prioritizing groups by risk and level of exposure. Vaccination efforts are currently focused on frontline healthcare workers at acute care hospitals, EMTs and paramedics, staff and residents of skilled nursing facilities, and others providing emergency medical services. Vaccine allocation is based on available resources. The best thing everyone can do right now is to continue using all the tools available to help stop this pandemic as we rollout the vaccine. Stay home as much as possible and only go out for work, exercise, or essential services. Calaveras Public Health understands that some people may be nervous about the COVID-19 vaccine — this is reasonable. Scientists and medical researchers worked tirelessly to develop and test the vaccine. This has given us the confidence in the COVID-19 vaccine and becomes another critical tool in our toolbox to slow the spread of COVID-19. The vaccine as well as other prevention measures are the roadmap for a faster and more sustainable recovery to help our communities move forward.

The Regional Stay at Home Order remains in effect. Calaveras County is grouped with 11 other counties which include: Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Mariposa, Merced, San Benito, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tulare, Tuolumne. Calaveras is currently subject to the requirements of the Regional Stay at Home Order given that the regional ICU bed capacity remains below 15%.

The Regional Stay at Home Order urges Californians to stay at home as much as possible to limit the mixing with other households that can lead to COVID-19 spread. It allows access to (and travel for) critical services and allows outdoor activities to preserve Californians' physical and mental health. The order will be lifted when a region's projected ICU capacity meets or exceeds 15%. This will be assessed on a weekly basis.

Everyone is at risk for COVID-19 and should take precautions to avoid getting exposed to the virus. Older adults and people with underlying medical conditions are at increased risk for severe illness and death from COVID-19. This means that they may be hospitalized, require a ventilator to help them breathe, or may even be fatal. COVID-19 can be very serious and Calaveras Public Health asks that you follow the safety guidelines.

Because COVID-19 is highly infectious, one infection can quickly grow into an outbreak. The safest way to gather is to spend time with people in the same household and gather virtually with family and friends who aren't from your household. Traveling to see friends and family could increase your risk of infection and further the spread of COVID-19 in your community. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) strongly recommends:

- Californians stay home or in their region and avoid non-essential travel
- Anyone arriving into California should self-quarantine for 14 days after arrival.

For complete details and requirements, read CDPH's Travel Advisory.

OptumServe continues to provide no-cost COVID-19 testing at the Sonora location. Register online at www.ihicare.com/covidtesting or call (888) 634-1123. The testing site is located at the Mother Lode Fairgrounds, Blake Elliot Building (Creekside), 220 Southgate Drive, Sonora, CA 95370. Additional COVID-19 test sites can be found on the Calaveras County COVID-19 website.

Testing for COVID-19 is advised, especially:

- People who have symptoms of COVID-19
- People who have had close contact with someone that is confirmed to have COVID-19
- People who have been asked or referred to get tested by their healthcare provider

Public Health staff continue to investigate new cases to determine any possible persons who may have had close personal contact with the positive individuals. Close contacts may be contacted by the health department and monitored for signs and symptoms of COVID-19 illness.

Protect yourself and others from COVID-19. The virus is spreading in the community. Stay safe by taking some simple precautions. The best ways to avoid exposure to COVID-19 are to:

- Wear a face mask that covers your nose and mouth when you leave home, including public places and anywhere you will be around people who do not live with you.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or use hand sanitizer. Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from other people.
- Stay home if you are sick.
- Avoid gathering with other households.

Symptoms can appear 2-14 days after exposure to the virus. The symptoms of COVID 19 include:

- Fever or chills

- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Fatigue
- Muscle or body aches
- Headache
- New loss of taste or smell
- Sore throat
- Congestion or runny nose
- Nausea or vomiting
- Diarrhea

Look for emergency warning signs for COVID-19. If someone is showing signs, seek emergency care immediately:

- Trouble breathing
- New confusion or weakness
- Bluish lips or face
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- Inability to wake or stay awake

Calaveras Public Health asks the public to be aware of scams. A contact tracer will never ask for your social security number, bank account number, or credit card information. Our contact tracers work for Calaveras Public Health. Contact tracers help contact people who have COVID-19 to track symptoms and make sure to keep our community safe and prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Calaveras Public Health encourages that all people 6 months and older get their yearly flu vaccine. While getting the flu vaccine will not protect against COVID-19, it is shown to reduce the risk of flu illness, hospitalization, and death. Please speak with your local medical provider or pharmacist for flu vaccine.

To receive information and resources related to COVID-19 [visit the Calaveras County COVID-19 website.](#)

Calaveras County braces for post-holiday Covid-19 surge

Dakota Morlan January 5, 2021 / *The Calaveras Enterprise*

As COVID-19 rages through Central Valley hospitals, Calaveras County's only hospital waits with bated breath.

State data showing 0% ICU capacity in the San Joaquin Valley Region, in which Calaveras and Tuolumne counties have been grouped for COVID-19 monitoring purposes, do not reflect the current situation locally, according to Doug Archer, President/CEO of Dignity Health Mark Twain Medical Center in San Andreas.

While valley hospitals are getting "hammered" by a post-holiday wave of COVID-19 patients, Calaveras County is "by no means in that boat," Archer said. At least, not yet.

Total hospitalized patients at Mark Twain have remained at an average of about 14 since the Thanksgiving surge, nowhere near the hospital's bed capacity of 25. In the case of an unprecedented influx of patients, staff members at the facility can execute a surge plan and nearly double the number of beds within hours, Archer said.

Archer added that state data on ICU bed availability does not reflect the surge plans at most hospitals, which allow for a significant increase in capacity.

While some regional hospitals have activated their surge plans, Mark Twain remains in the clear, peaking at nine COVID-19 patients just before Christmas. Since then, the average number of hospitalized COVID-19-positive patients has hovered at around four, Archer said. The small community hospital even accepted a transfer patient from Stockton two months ago due to limited capacity in the Central Valley.

"Although none of us want to be here in the pandemic, if you're in Calaveras County, you're in an enviable position compared to some of your other friends in California," Archer said.

On New Year's Eve, the hospital discharged its longest-staying COVID-19 patient after she spent 41 days on a ventilator. According to Archer, an average stay at the hospital is four days. So far, four COVID-19 related deaths have occurred at Mark Twain, three of whom were advanced in age and had chronic conditions.

Though cautiously optimistic, Archer expects the recent holidays will bring another surge in the coming weeks.

"Generally, with what's been going on with the patterns, we're about three weeks behind Stockton," Archer said.

In San Joaquin County, the positivity rate as of Tuesday was at 17%—significantly higher than Calaveras' 11%. In a population of roughly 752,000, state data showed 333 hospitalized COVID-19 patients and 87 of those patients in ICU, leaving just 17 standard ICU beds available.

Archer is hopeful that if a similar surge does make its way to Calaveras County, it will be after the demand in the Central Valley has subsided somewhat, allowing for patient transfers, if needed.

Yet daily confirmed COVID-19 cases in the county have been on the incline since November, and first responders are taking notice.

Last week, Angels Camp Fire Chief John Rohrabough posted a public message on Facebook encouraging residents to practice safe behavior.

"Over the last few days we have seen a major increase in COVID-19-related 911 emergency calls in our small community," Rohrabough wrote, stating that in the last five days, 50% of all 911 calls in Angels Camp were for COVID-19 patients, and one of them had died. "If you have to leave your house please wear a mask or face covering. This is probably the most single important thing we can do to decrease the spread in our community."

Rohrabough told the Enterprise that he was "proud" that nearly all of his firefighters chose to be vaccinated against COVID-19, with over 70 total vaccinated on Dec. 29. Rohrabough was the first.

At Mark Twain Medical Center, the vaccine has been administered to all staff members who wanted it—roughly 50% of total staff. Those vaccinated will receive their second dose on Thursday. Archer said that the approximately 175 staff members vaccinated was "not too bad," considering that just 35% were willing in the beginning.

"I think a lot of people didn't want to go first," Archer said.

Vaccines for residents and staff at the county's only skilled nursing facility, Avalon Health Care in San Andreas, also became available early last week. An Avalon spokesperson did not report how many, or if any, vaccines had been administered at the facility, which suffered a devastating outbreak in September, accounting for the majority of countywide COVID-19 deaths.

"Think it's going pretty well here," Archer said of the vaccine rollout. "It might be a little while before it gets to the general public, but the county is doing a good job of getting it out to first responders, sheriffs, paramedics, you name it. We're moving through it very quick."

Environmental Study starts on 2015 project

Nick Baptista January 8 2021 / *The Valley Springs News*

Preliminary environmental work is under way in downtown Valley Springs for a project scheduled for spring 2025, according to Warren Alford, Caltrans District 10 chief public information officer.

Survey crews have been busy the past few days marking right-of-way and conducting soil samples, all part of the environmental review and study process in preparation for a \$7.8 million safety and improvement project approved last summer by county officials.

The so-called Valley Springs Town Center Connectivity Plan has been in the works for several years and includes pedestrian, bicycle and motor vehicle safety improvements in downtown area.

Major improvements could be a traffic signal at State Route 12 entrance into the Valley Oaks Shopping Center and a left turn lane off eastbound SR 12 into Castle Rock Mobile Home Park. Collisions along that stretch of the highway has been identified in excess of statewide averages. All of the work in the area may not necessarily be Caltrans related, Alford said.

Earth

By Katie Ford

Wild horses folded into their last night.
One burrowed against the dead's descending heat
as three cantered from the threadbare wood.
You must leaving everything lit
by city light and Damascus light, anything fueled
except by your eyes on these animal bodies.

Species by species, light by light.
As for the tarpan it shall be for you.
A reckoning so slow you aren't even frightened.

from The Paris Review No. 184, Spring 2008



North Fork Stanislaus River Canyon, Calaveras County - Photo by Megan Fiske

Community Action Project/Calaveras Planning Coalition
www.calaverascap.com

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